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## AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF HENRY A. STEBBINS.

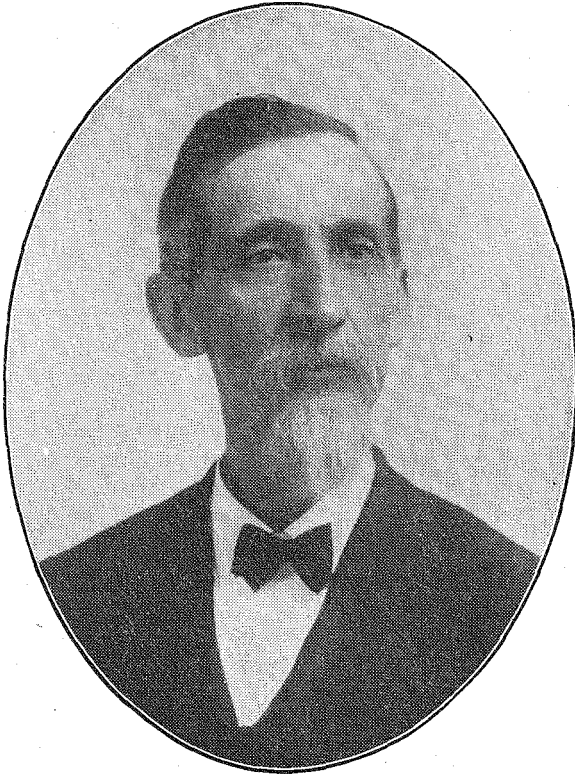
WRITTEN IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER, 1919.

My ancestors came from England to America nearly three hundred years ago, according to the genealogical records published in book form, one in 1869 and the other about 1890. I am in the seventh generation from Rowland Stebbins, who arrived in America in 1634 and finally settled near Springfield, Massachusetts, and I am in the eighth family from Robert Pease who came from Essex County, England, arriving in Boston on the ship *Francis* in 1634. He located where Enfield, Connecticut, now stands. Whether the two families were acquainted in early times I do not know. Thus both ancestors arrived only fourteen years after the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth in 1620.

The name of my father's father was Gad Stebbins. He was born in 1748 and was a soldier in the Revolutionary War, enlisting in 1776. My father was born at Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1790. My mother's father was Chandler Pease, born near Enfield, Connecticut, August 24, 1779. His wife was Beulah Kibbe. They married in 1805, and in 1811 they removed to what was called the Connecticut Reserve, or the "Western Reserve," locating in Ashtabula County, Ohio. Northern Ohio was then a great wilderness, an extensive woodland. Their one near neighbor lived two miles distant through dense forests.

Soon after their arrival came the "War of 1812," when

the British and the Indians were in conflict with the American settlers all along the Canadian border from Vermont to Detroit. All the men had to take their guns and go to war, leaving their families to such fate as might result, yet with trust in God that he would protect them. British threats



HENRY A. STEBBINS

were made that the Indians were to cross Lake Erie and kill the few white inhabitants of Northern Ohio. But for some cause, perhaps the Lord's special protection, they did not come. Grandfather was with the army at the battle of the Thames River on Canadian soil and my memory is that he served till the conflict in that part of the border was over.

My mother, Julia Emily Pease, was the oldest child of Chandler and Beulah Pease, born in Enfield, Connecticut, January 20, 1807. She was five years old (past) when grandfather was in the army and there was a boy three years old and a baby in the cradle. These children were the only associates my grandmother had when the news arrived that the Indians were coming to kill all the white settlers in that part of Ohio.

Along in the twenties the family moved to Geauga County, Ohio, and there on April 13, 1828, Charles Stebbins and Julia E. Pease were united in marriage. Their first five children were born in or near Chardon, Geauga county, which is about nine miles from Kirtland.

The sixth and last child, Henry A., was born in Toledo, Ohio, on January 28, 1844. All grew to manhood and womanhood and had families. My father died when I was a child and my mother died at Pecatonica, Illinois, April 13, 1874, on her forty-sixth wedding anniversary. All of the children are now dead excepting myself, the last one of the other five having died on February 18, 1910. Of the five, two died in Denver, one in Berlin, Germany (where he was taking medical treatment), one in Oklahoma, and one in Pennsylvania.

As I was born when the other boys were from ten to fifteen years old and were away from home earning their living, I seldom saw them when I was a child, excepting my brother George. He bought land in Wisconsin and moved my mother, my sister and myself from Ohio around the Great Lakes from Cleveland, Ohio, to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in April, 1851, when I was past seven years old. I remember railway cars at Cleveland where we boarded the lake steamer, but there was no railroad built to Chicago until 1852, as history shows.

I only saw my oldest brother five times during my life after my babyhood till I met him in Denver in 1902. Two of

my brothers were wealthy and they thought it was my duty after I came from the army to enter the same race for wealth that they had done and when I refused to do so and took up with the Latter Day Saints for life and for my life work, they had nothing more to do with me and did not even write me for many years. But in 1902 when I visited Denver I called on the two who then lived there. One I had not met for nearly thirty-five years, not since November, 1867, and the other not for over twenty-eight years, not since April, 1874, when he came to Illinois to attend our mother's funeral. The oldest brother went to Europe in 1903 and died there in 1904, leaving between a quarter and a half million dollars in property to care for orphans and to go to individuals he desired to help. I expected nothing and received nothing from him for reasons already stated. The other brother in Denver received me quite warmly and after that until his death on February 18, 1910, he wrote me many letters and seemed to rejoice that he had found me as a man, and that he considered me worthy of his friendship.

Coming now to my own life story and experience I state that my brother George brought us to Newark Township, Rock County, Wisconsin, eight miles northwest of the small city of Beloit, in April, 1851. There I attended the country school in the log building which was after the manner of school-houses in those early times. During about four years, summer and winter, I walked a mile to school and back each day, and on Sundays I attended the primitive Sunday school which was kept going by a few earnest men and women, Baptists and Methodists, in that new farming community. There were also preaching services on many of the Sundays. In Ohio, my mother had become obedient to the teachings of Alexander Campbell, but was glad of religious services of any kind in the new country.

It should be understood by the younger generations that in those times there was great simplicity in everyday life, and considerable privation, although people then did not greatly realize it as such. The multitude and variety of things to eat and wear and to use so plentifully now, were then entirely unknown. With hand sickle or cradle they cut their grain, and yoked oxen did the hauling where now hundreds of varieties of machines do the work, and many with electricity hitched on.

Each family then had a tin mold of six or twelve tubes in which to put wicking and pour hot tallow for candles. When ever the supply of candles or of tallow ran short then a bit of rag in a saucer of lard lit up the gloom until they could go to bed. The first kerosene I ever saw was, I believe, in 1859, after its discovery in Pennsylvania. I think we paid fifty-six cents per gallon. It was a great improvement over candles, but too costly for the poor to use abundantly. We did not dream of the time when we might say "Let there be light," and then by turning a button the house be filled with a great brightness beyond many candles or kerosene lamps.

As my brother George tired of country life and went to Cincinnati to work at typesetting again, the trade he had learned in Sandusky, Ohio, before we came West, therefore my other brothers thought advisable that mother should live in the village of Beloit. So we moved there in the fall of 1855 and lived until December, 1856, when we were removed to Pecatonica, Illinois, west of Rockford. There I attended school what I could and clerked in stores to help out our living expenses. In 1860, when I was sixteen years old, I engaged with a man to learn the wagon making business. At this I worked until after the Civil War began, partially learning the trade. In those days the felloes for wagon wheels were sawed out by hand work, as also spokes were hewed from riven oak pieces

and put into shape to be planed. And as all gearing pieces were sawed from hard and tough two inch oak planks, and then dressed with plane and draw shave, it was not an easy task by any means to do this kind of labor.

Then the great war between the North and the South began, and nearly all the boys and young men in town and country enlisted, especially those who were between sixteen and twenty-two years of age, and many older ones, too. I thought it my duty to go and my mother did not forbid me. So I went South and marched through the heat and the dust, and the mud and the snow, and when following the southern armies in a dry land we ate beans and "hard tack" crackers, and for days at a time drank from the mud holes, sometimes where the army mules drank with us from the same hole, or we used a rubber tube with pumice stone attached and sucked the dirty water through it until the mud became so thick on the stone that we had to scrape it off and try again. After one battle while we were guarding prisoners we dug small pits in the wet gravel of the creek and dipped out and used to moisten our mouths the filthy water that oozed in. At other times snow and freezing weather came, and when we had hastened after the enemy and left our tents and even our overcoats behind, it caused much suffering. These occasions and the rains and the other hardships caused the death during the war of at least a hundred thousand soldier boys in the process of "breaking in," or becoming hardened to the realities of soldier's life. From my company of ninety men fifteen died within four months from the start, just from exposure and experiences here mentioned. The length of time served did not matter so much as did the kind of service gone through, whether on the battlefield, or on the march, or by diseases experienced in camp. Also medical and surgical skill upon the part of men who were then accepted as doctors and sur-

geons was quite poor as I remember the work of some of them in hospitals. Some appeared to have little or no experience beyond observation, and quinine was given by some of them as a panacea for every ill. The world war of 1914 to 1918 has proved the vast progress made in skill and in sanitation. It is safe to say that ten times as many sick or wounded died under similar conditions from 1861 to 1865 as did in this last war.

Statistics say that the Northern States had in 1861 a population of about twenty-three million, and that the army enrollments during the war were two million six hundred and forty thousand. Some of these were reenlistments but enough were not so to make about one soldier in the army to every nine inhabitants, counting men, women, children and babies. It can be seen, therefore, that the Civil War was a great evil to the nation, especially as over four hundred thousand men and boys are said to have perished, one hundred thousand in getting toughened, a hundred and twenty-five thousand killed in battle or died of wounds soon after, and forty thousand died in southern prisons. At Andersonville, under that cruel Nero Wirz, over thirteen thousand were starved, or shot, or died of disease and dreadful treatment. Also other thousands in Belle Isle, Marietta, Florence and in Libby Prison. And over one hundred and fifty thousand died of disease and hardships late in the war.

There are said to be more than three hundred thousand graves in the national cemeteries, north and south. Also thousands were brought home and there died and were buried. And many bodies moldered away in the woods and among the hills and valleys of the southern land, and not a few were eaten by hogs and wild beasts.

But in the war the covenant that our fathers made with God in the immortal Declaration of Independence was fulfilled,

wherein they pledged, in strong appeal to him, that they believe that *all* men were created with equal privileges to life and liberty. In 1776 slaves were used in twelve of the Thirteen Colonies, and they were considered as cattle for sale and exchange, although many good people desired slavery to be done away with, especially in the North. And there it was gradually overcome until no slaves were held north of Mason and Dixon's line. The men of 1776 did not comprehend the full meaning of their covenant or agreement, but the Lord did, and in time the Nation had to make good its pledge to him.

Agitation produced strong feelings, especially after the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Bill of 1850 and the Dred Scott Decision of 1854. Finally Abraham Lincoln stood forth in 1858 as the strong champion of freedom and in his seven Illinois debates with Stephen A. Douglas he brought before the people the plain truths on the injustice and the evils of slavery. Lincoln declared that this nation could not long continue "half slave and half free." The debates led to his being nominated and elected as president of the United States. And then his course, "under God," caused African slavery to be abolished from our land.

At that time also was fulfilled the purpose of the Lord, as spoken to Joseph Smith, that in God's sight it is not right that any man should be in bondage, one to another. Thus another great step was taken toward the universal righteousness that will yet fill the earth with happiness and peace.

Many of the men could not endure the hardships, hence they either died or were discharged and returned to their homes in the North. I was in two hospitals and each day saw the dead carried out, those whom disease took or who died from exposure and exhaustion. After a time I was discharged and came back. For a year I was unable to do any work and afterwards suffered during many years. In fact, I do not



believe that I ever did recover from the effects. However in time I was able to do considerable labor at my trade, wagon making and repairing. During this period I lived with my mother in her home. She was supplied by my brothers with means for a frugal living, and I aided her all that I could. Owing to the imperfect hospital records early in the war, and the loss of some records, I failed to obtain a pension until twenty-five years after the war, not any until the law of June 27, 1890 was passed. In October, 1891 I received back pension for one year at twelve dollars per month, the highest rate then paid under that law. About 1915 I began to receive nineteen dollars per month and since October, 1918 I have received thirty-two dollars per month, which is a blessing appreciated by us more than I can tell.

I come now to my religious experiences. While in the army, especially while at the hospitals, my thoughts turned to God, and I obtained a Bible and read it a great deal. I also prayed for the Lord's help that I might know and do what was right. Furthermore, I promised him that if he would guide me and teach me, also show me what I ought to do for salvation, I would accept it and strive to obey. I supposed then that all Christian religions were correct and acceptable to God, and that all I needed to do was to find satisfaction as to my individual duty before God in any of the churches. I was correct in a degree in this last idea, but satisfaction did not come where I expected it would, not by contact or membership with the religious organizations which were so numerous in the land.

But as I had promised the Lord that on my return home I would seek the truth and learn my duty, so I did, and I believe I did so sincerely and faithfully. Yet not anything I found satisfied my soul. I was not a critic nor a faultfinder,

and I did not cast aside any good I found. Nevertheless I did not obtain the satisfaction I sought and longed for.

Soon after my return I was invited by my uncle Henry Pease to visit them in Newark, Rock County, Wisconsin, and I went and remained some time. Their home was about a mile from where my mother lived when I was a small boy, too young to realize that my uncle was a "Mormon" or what it meant if I ever heard it. I found that he and his wife were members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and that he was in the old organization near Kirtland, Ohio, in the thirties. I was astonished and startled by the strangeness of it all. I heard Samuel Powers (one of uncle's near neighbors) preach to a few people who gathered from the vicinity and from Janesville. But the story seemed so absurd, so opposite to all the teaching of other peoples that I opposed it. However, I had told the Lord that I wanted a knowledge of the truth, and as this doctrine declared that the promise of Christ was as good in our time as it was formerly, namely "Ye shall know the truth" by the power of God's Spirit, therefore I could not resist putting it to the test and proving it to be either true or false. Consequently I was baptized by Brother Powers soon after coming from the army.

I returned to my mother's home in Illinois, about thirty-five miles away, fully satisfied that I had found the truth I sought. But in speaking of it to my friends and acquaintances of Pecatonica and vicinity, they wondered that I could be so deluded and deceived. Yet I was respected because of my daily work, clerking in a drug store a part of the time, and when I became able, working in wagon shops, having charge of two shops at different times and being fully trusted with the money receipts and with the use of material. No one had anything to say against my honesty or integrity, that I ever heard of.

Near the last of my work at wagon making (1867) Mr. J.

M. Leland became a partner in the shop with Mr. Sabin, and he observed my Testament on the back of my work bench where I studied and committed to memory texts on the gospel. In a friendly manner he began to chaff me about my religion, not supposing anything could really be said in its defense. But my answers about the principles of the gospel of Christ and the rewards of faith and obedience being now as in days of old, so interested him that he could no longer rest in the Congregational Church. He told me that for a long time he had been sorely troubled in his heart over the great change in the religious world from the doctrines of the New Testament, and that at times he had been so unhappy over it that he would go to their minister and seek an answer to satisfy his soul as to *why* the difference existed. He would be partially comforted but never entirely so. After he came into contact with me the horror of the name we bore distressed him. Practically no one knew of any Latter Day Saints but those in Utah, for when I was baptized August 23, 1863, there were not over seven hundred members in all the Reorganized Church.

However he became so deeply interested and saw the facts so plainly that he feared that it was the real truth of God under such a name.

Then he thought that if his wife would hear and accept it perhaps he could endure the rest. So he had me come to his house evenings and he would draw me out by questions and thus get the whole subject and the proofs before her. She was a woman of firm mind and great powers of comprehension, one who said little yet thought a great deal. Before either of us knew it she was interested and was making it a subject of prayer to God for light and understanding. In fact she confessed her readiness for baptism before he did, but this was not reached until in 1870 after I had been in the mission field in 1868 and 1869. I baptized them at Marengo, Illinois,

in June, 1870, at district conference time. They were so true and worthy that they became standards of righteousness before the world until their deaths. I will speak hereafter of them and the later work at Pecatonica.

During those years from 1863 to 1867, I went as often as I could afford it to Newark to learn more about the gospel from Brother Powers, and to be comforted by him, but the wagon work was too heavy for me and my health was poor enough, therefore I had but little money except for bare necessities. However, at three times I sent five dollars to Bishop Rogers as tithing, and when I became convinced that I was actually called to preach the gospel I denied myself things I needed and thus saved dime by dime of my small income so that I might pay my fare and other expenses in ministry work. For in those times only a few, even of men with families drew money from the treasury of the church. All others went at their own expense.

In the years of loneliness, away from the church, and with few books and no compendiums or tracts to read, I met problems every day, and I used to write long lists of questions to have ready for my trips to Wisconsin that I might ask Brother Powers for solutions. Many of them he answered so quickly that I wondered I had not solved them alone. I used to induce him to sit up late at night that I might learn more, also I would follow him to the field and to the barn to ask questions. During some of these visits I rode with him to old Voree, Wisconsin, where our Burlington Branch existed, and there in 1865, 1866, 1867, I met Brethren John C. Gaylord, William Aldrich, David Montgomery, and others. Also we visited Saints at Janesville and Porter in Rock County, namely Noah and O. N. Dutton, Henry Scarcliff, and the grandparents and parents of Charles B. Woodstock, now well known in Lamoni and other places for his ability as an educator. At Porter were Mother

Gibbs and daughter, Sister Carrington, who had been members of the old organization, and the latter's daughter, a young girl of seven, since then the wife and now the widow of Brother C. C. Hoague, whose faithful services through many years as bishop's agent in southern Wisconsin were well known in that state until his death in 1919.

The only two tracts published by the Reorganized Church at an early time were issued in 1852, and 1853, namely, "A Word of Consolation to the Scattered Saints," and "The Voice of the Captives." Not any gospel principles were published until years later, and we had no compilation of texts to guide the inquirers who were in the church or out of it, and for years no Book of Mormon or Book of Covenants of our own. We had to obtain those published by the Utah Church and by the Z. Brooks organization. This explanation shows the great contrast between the disadvantages then and the advantages now. But in this abundant time few seem to appreciate the plentitude. However the "Voice of Warning" was printed in the sixties and circulated; in fact its truths were the foundation of the faith of many converts.

From Samuel Powers I learned his experiences, and also from him and later from Zenas H. Gurley, Senior, and others I learned the history of the little conference held in the town of Newark, Rock County, Wisconsin on June 12, 13, 1852. I have seen it stated that this conference was held in Beloit, but it was six miles from Beloit, near to the home of Jason W. Briggs. It convened because of revelations received by Brethren Briggs and Gurley some months previously. They and others were dissatisfied with the gross leadership of Brigham Young, James J. Strang, Charles B. Thompson and William Smith, and the words given them declared that Joseph, the son of Joseph, should be brought forth to preside over the church. Therefore was held the conference of June 12 and

13, 1852, when the claims of those unworthy leaders were cast off and they resolved to wait for the man whom the Lord had promised he would bring to them. About two months after that conference I saw the place when I visited a cousin of mine whose parents lived near to the grove where the conference was held. It was about two miles from my mother's home. I was then in the ninth year of my age.

Samuel Powers informed me about 1865 that he had long been convinced that the work was true, but that the reproach was too much for him to endure. He said that before that conference he was taken very sick, and that he was given up to die. But then came a manifestation to him that though, in the course of nature, death would result, yet if he would accept the doctrine of Christ and be baptized he should be healed and live to preach the gospel. He wanted to live and not die, so he made the promise while on his bed. Immediately he became better and very soon was restored and went about his work. He was present on June 13, 1852, but not as a member, yet soon after was baptized and ordained and began to preach. Also in April, 1855, he was chosen and ordained an apostle. In his time he did much labor and baptized many people. He was loved for his integrity and for his plain, clear preaching of the first principles of the gospel, always on the first principles. He died on February 16, 1873 when he was only fifty-two years old.

During my association with Brother Powers he assured me that the Lord wanted me in the gospel service, and when I objected because I had neither education enough nor fitness in any manner for such work he said that I could do much good if I would accept the call. He finally assured me that he knew that I was called of God to the work as fully as he was called. After refusing until it seemed my heart would break if I continued to refuse, I accepted and was ordained an elder on

July 20, 1865, at Brother Powers's house in Newark. I returned to Illinois, but being alone and having no one to lead or help me, and feeling my inability and lack of every quality, I did not even attempt to do public preaching until in December, 1867.

Nevertheless, I talked the gospel, as before related, and I attended the General Conferences at Plano in April, 1866 and April, 1868, also some district conferences. In April, 1866, I became acquainted with Brethren Joseph Smith, Israel L. Rogers and others. On February 8, 1868, at Plano, I was chosen secretary and recorder of the Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin District, and at Brother Joseph's house I spent a week copying branch records into a district book. On the next Saturday, at his request, I accompanied Joseph to the Mission Branch, LaSalle County, where he preached on Sunday, February 16, and I made another attempt. But I was a poor thing and also had no courage nor confidence in my ability.

Although I was then an entire stranger to the most of the Saints in Northern Illinois, yet I resolved to attend their May conference in 1867 at Marengo, forty miles east of Pecatonica. I also attended the November conference there, and at the two I met Brethren Zenas H. Gurley, senior, William W. Blair, Ebenezer Robinson, John Landers, Charles H. Jones, and others, all of whom were kind to me. And at that time Brother Jones brought into my heart and life such blessed comfort and peace of mind that a brightness of hope began to shine in my heart and I came to think that perhaps God would indeed bring about my salvation and enable me to do some small part in his work. Also Brother Joseph Smith gave me cheer and comfort by his friendship and gospel love, manifested in word and deed.

Therefore I consented that my name go in for a mission

appointments in April, 1868, at Plano. I was placed under Brother Edmund C. Briggs, in company with Brother David H. Smith, Joseph Smith's youngest brother. We labored in Michigan, at Galien, and in Van Buren County, next in Allegan County, and later in and near Grand Rapids. Through the years since then the little band of Saints in Allegan County have spread and been known far away, such as Horace Church, Asa S. Cochran, and Orlin B. Thomas and their families, as also Brother and Sister Henry C. Smith and others of Van Buren County. I tried to do what I could, but my health was poor and also my ability was so small that I am sure it was of little value except perhaps in comforting and strengthening some of the members. But it cost the church nothing for I supplied my own clothing and paid my own fare. Went on foot much, and received during the entire season silver change that totalled four dollars. There were only a few members and they had little money in the scarce days following the Civil War. But that was the least of my troubles.

While at Galien, in the fall, I was taken with the fever and ague, and I finally became so very ill that I returned to my mother's home in Illinois. The winter was spent in study and reading and in practicing Ben Pittman's system of shorthand. I made a trip to Plano and to Brother Israel L. Rogers' home at Fox River and was cheered by him and by Brother Joseph. The latter's first wife Emma, was then in serious condition from consumption, and she died in March following (1869), leaving motherless three young daughters, Emma, Carrie, and Zaide.

Early in March 1869 I went to Janesville, Wisconsin, on invitation from Brother and Sister O. N. Dutton, with whom I had become acquainted in 1867. A pleasant and lasting friendship was established between us as time went on, and their home had always a bright and happy welcome for me. Time



has not dimmed the memory of those days. Also in the branch called Burlington, including Saints at Lyons and near Lake Geneva, were Brethren John C. Gaylord, David and John Montgomery, David Stiles, and Ambrose Hicks, who always gave me welcome.

That spring (1869) Brother Joseph wrote of having a call from Sister Eliza G. Page of Hudson, Wisconsin, near Stillwater and Saint Paul, Minnesota, for an elder to come there and he asked me to go on what seemed to me a far-off trip. I consented, but as I had a very poor summer in health I did not start until about August 1, and then I had to stop in Prairie du Chien at request of Brother and Sister Samuel Ackerly of that place. They had gone from England to Utah and there endured much and came away in 1864, locating in Prairie du Chien. But chancing to hear of the Reorganized Church they had sent for Brother Reuben Newkirk and he came and taught and baptized them. Brother Samuel Powers had also visited them once. They gave me a glad welcome and I remained a week and preached four times in one of the city school houses.

From Prairie du Chien I went up the Mississippi on the steamer *War Eagle*, there being no railroads then along the Mississippi. In fact there was no railroad line through from Chicago to Saint Paul until the next year. At Hudson, Sister Page gave me welcome and excellent care. She had taught school at Nauvoo before and at the time of the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum, and then had come to Saint Paul and vicinity and remained. She now engaged the court house and I stayed about six weeks and preached there and across Saint Croix Lake at Baytown, near Stillwater, Minnesota. Also I baptized four persons whom she had taught the gospel before my arrival. What measure of good was done only eternity can reveal.

Then I traveled in the mail hack through pine woods to Menomonee, Wisconsin, where Brother John Macauley met

and took me to his home at the little sawmill town of Waubeek. He and his wife and her sister, Sister Colburn, had obeyed the gospel in Scotland in 1841 and they came to Nauvoo in 1842. After the break up they went to Wisconsin. Had learned of the Reorganization and in the *Herald* had read of my trip to Hudson. Therefore he wrote me and I visited there. I remained three weeks preaching many times at Waubeek and at Dunnville. The old folks wished to renew their covenant and also Sister Colburn's daughter, Nettie, asked for baptism. I administered the ordinance to the four on October 24, 1869 and ordained Brother Macauley an elder. He had been a high priest at Glasgow, Scotland. These people died many years ago but they kept the faith and loved the truth to the end of life.

Before the river froze up I took the little steamer to Durand and to the foot of Lake Pepin, and then the *War Eagle* to Prairie du Chien, where I preached during two weeks and rejoiced with the Ackerly's over the certainty of the gospel and the goodness of God. They so longed to be with the Saints that they removed to Decatur County, Iowa, in the summer of 1871, being among the very first to locate in the so called "colony," the region selected by Brethren Israel L. Rogers, David Dancer, Elijah Banta and others as the nucleus of a gathering into the "regions round about," now known as Lamoni. To the end of their lives Brother and Sister Ackerly bore strong testimony that the latter-day work originated with the Lord and that it was revealed from heaven. Of this fact they related many remarkable evidences and experiences similar to those seen and experienced by the saints in New Testament times, as stated therein.

Coming home before Thanksgiving Day (1869) to Brother O. N. Dutton's near Janesville, I remained through the winter preaching in the Janesville Branch and at Hanover. Late in

March I went to Pecatonica to see my mother and sister and thence to Marengo, of which branch I was a member, thence to Plano and attended the General Conference of April, 1870. Brother William H. Garrett and I served as secretaries of that conference. The first quorum of elders was organized and I was enrolled in it. Later I was chosen as its secretary and was ordained one of Brother Banta's counselors.

Before I left Plano that April Brother Joseph Smith proposed that I consent to serve as president of the Northern Illinois District. He said that he intended to resign for the reason that he could not take time from his other church work to travel in the district and do the things that needed to be done. But I refused to consent and was indignant at the idea. Compared with the old elders I felt I was but a small boy and not fitted for the task. However, it worked on my mind until when at Marengo I asked for spiritual light through Brother Charles H. Jones. He sought the Lord and I was told that if I would accept it God would bless me and enable me to do the work. So when the June session of 1870 came, and the wish of the branches and of the Saints seemed so unanimous, I accepted and went to work. In July I moved my personal effects from Pecatonica to Brother Joseph's home in Plano, as he invited me to do. How kindly they cared for me; and from that time onward, whenever I was back from my trips, through the district, I had my steady home at Joseph's house, excepting during the two periods when Brother and Sister Dancer lived in Plano, 1871-2 and 1875-7 and insisted on my having room and home with them. Of course many other Saints were free in hospitality, according to the true gospel fellowship in every age. Also from 1870 to 1880 I was often in Brother Israel L. Rogers' home at Fox River and Sandwich, and sometimes at Brother Elijah Banta's. Brother Dancer removed to Decatur County, Iowa, in February, 1877.

I owned no property of any kind excepting a few wagon tools left at my mother's, and I had neither wife nor children to take my time or attention. Thus for six years from June, 1870 to June, 1876, I was somewhere in the field constantly, driving Joseph's faithful old mare Tatty, and later other horses, over the prairies of northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. Summer and winter I went through heat and cold, through snow drifts and pelting rains. There were finally thirteen branches, namely Plano, Sandwich, Fox River, Mission, Amboy, Batavia, Boone County, Piper City, Wilton Center, Braidwood, Streator, Pecatonica, Janesville, and Burlington, the last two in Wisconsin. The last named branch was on the site of Voree, the notable spot where James J. Strang flourished for a time and where his body was brought for burial about 1856. I drove each year fifteen hundred to eighteen hundred miles.

Not infrequently Brother Joseph Smith accompanied me to some point for one Sunday or to district conference, and at other times Brethren William W. Blair, Zenas H. Gurley, senior, Edmond C. Briggs, Israel L. Rogers, David H. Smith, Charles Williams, O. N. Dutton, and John Landers went with me, but usually I was alone. Both in 1870 and 1871 I drove through Amboy, Dixon, and Mount Carroll to Savannah on the Mississippi River, and with Brother Charles Williams held meetings for weeks, resulting in several baptisms.

I also preached near Rochelle, Illinois, where Father John Landers lived, and baptized his daughter, Mrs. Mary Peale, in 1871. He and I labored near Pecatonica and had large attendance among old friends of mine. My mother had then united with the church, having been signally blessed of the Lord with striking testimonies in dreams that showed her the path of duty and that she had not yet done *all* that was necessary in order to receive complete reward and a fullness of

joy. She was baptized at Plano in June, 1871 by Brother Joseph Smith.

I have said that I was somewhere in the field continually throughout the six years of 1870 and 1876. My effort was to be where I thought help was most needed, either in the branches or in places where a few Saints lived and had secured openings for preaching to the people. When in branch limits I made it a practice to visit the homes of all Saints, whether they lived in a good house or a log one. In this way I became acquainted and learned their feelings and their experiences. In those days few had anything more than the common things of life. But they loved the gospel cause, and the only thought we elders had was to do them good, no matter about the inconveniences or the lack of means. With some Saints the conditions were poor, but I was fed and cared for with kind hospitality, as one of Christ's messengers even in scores of homes in that district of nearly two hundred miles square. The work of the Lord was all we thought about in connection with its effects upon the hearts and lives of those we sought to comfort and to strengthen with the Lord's truth. And though I received but about sixty dollars per year for clothing, postage stamps and other needful things, yet I was happy in the service of God. I had no home nor property of my own, but the words of Christ in Mark 10:30 were fulfilled to me, so far as this life is concerned. God grant the last part will be fulfilled in the life to come, I pray.

Some of the winters were severe to be riding about in an open buggy, therefore I tried to be where I could do good without so much driving as in summer. The winter of 1870-71 I spent in the Janesville, Burlington and Marengo branches. In the winter of 1871-2 I was able to go more and I labored in Mission, Wilton Center, Braidwood, Sandwich, Pecatonica, Janesville, and Batavia. In the fall of 1872 I accepted the kind

invitation of Brother and Sister David Dancer to stay that winter in their home at Wilton Center, sixteen miles southeast of Joliet and forty-five miles from Plano. I wrote Book of Mormon articles for the *Herald*, read Josephus through and preached each Sunday. In my memory is the kind love I received from those faithful Saints and from the Harveys, Bickfords and others there.

I mention here that late in March, 1872, I made my first visit to Nauvoo when on my way to the Saint Louis General Conference that year. I was with Brother Joseph at his mother's home about a week. A year or two before that about one fourth of the foundation walls of the "Nauvoo House" had been built upon and made into a two-story dwelling for "Mother Emma" and her husband, Major Bidamon. I had met her before at the Plano conference of April, 1868. I am thankful that I knew her. She was a wise, devoted, steadfast and faithful woman. Brother Alexander H. Smith then lived in the "Mansion House" at Nauvoo and he went with us to Saint Louis. He had dwelt at Plano in 1870 but soon returned to Nauvoo. It did not chance that I was ever associated with him in gospel work, except as secretaries of the Saint Louis conference in 1872. About forty Saints took the boat at Keokuk for the conference, elders and others from Iowa and Illinois. While there Brother Joseph and I lodged at the home of Brother William Roberts. The business transacted at these conferences is a matter of record and I do not need to mention it.

My book reads that in the winter of 1873-4 I labored in the Amboy, Mission, Batavia, Wilton Center, Braidwood and Piper City branches. Thus I tried the best I knew how to serve the interests of all the twelve branches. In the Mission branch, La Salle County, I was cared for in the homes of Brethren Thomas and John Hougas, Andrew, Oliver, Hans,

and Austin Hayer, Andrew K. Anderson, George W. Weld, O. A. Olsen, and Esquire Teal. All these excepting one or two have passed over, but their sons and daughters live in Illinois and at Lamoni.

On April 4, 1874, two days before General Conference convened at Plano, Brother Isaac Sheen, general recorder for the church, died. During the session I was called to the death bed of my mother at Pecatonica, one hundred miles northwest of Plano. She died on April 13, and Brother Blair came and preached the sermon. He informed me that the conference had chosen me as Brother Sheen's successor as church recorder, also that I was appointed as church secretary, pro tem. (In 1875 I was elected as permanent secretary.) As I had been district recorder for some years, my experience had rather fitted me for the larger duty; also I had a natural inclination or taste for that kind of work.

After my mother's death I remained to settle up her affairs, and by request of many acquaintances in the town, some of them my old comrades in the army, I began preaching in the Universalist Church and stayed more than a month, baptizing six excellent people and organizing a branch with Brother J. M. Leland as presiding priest. I have already mentioned the baptism of Brother and Sister Leland in 1870. Their daughter Clara E. was one of the six baptized now. Later I baptized the daughter Jennie M. They are now Sisters Kilgore and Johnson of Pecatonica and DeKalb, Illinois. Of the ten Saints counting my mother, seven or eight are now dead.

On June 1, 1874 I returned to Plano and preached at Little Rock. On June 19 was called to Chicago to preach the funeral sermon of George Barnett, husband of an aged sister who was a member of the old organization. Also I spoke in a schoolhouse in Forest Hill suburb. In September was in the city again visiting oldtime Saints, and preached on West Lake

Street. Thus I did the first ministry work there by any of our elders. Late in April, 1878, Brethren William H. Kelley and Columbus Scott went with me to that city and they preached one Sunday in a hall on West Lake, one hired by Sister Minnie Lewis (afterward Wickes). But not much was accomplished until a permanent place was hired and a man was stationed there at church expense. Then Brother Forscutt began in January, 1880 and continued. Although troubles arose later on, yet the cause survived and for many years past the work has prospered in Chicago.

In July, 1874, the Bishop, Brother Israel L. Rogers, obtained the church records by process of law, those having them in possession refusing to turn them over to the church until they were compelled to do so. There was an attempt to burn them, but lack of fire in the hot weather prevented. They were then put in a place of safety until I could take up the work upon them.

After preaching at Marengo and Sandwich I decided on a vacation trip to see the lands purchased in Decatur County, Iowa, by the Order of Enoch, of which I was the secretary. I also wanted to visit Saints, whom I had known in Michigan, Wisconsin and Illinois from 1868 onward, and who had either bought land for themselves or had rented of the order. So about July 24 I went out with Brother Elijah Banta. He was president of the company. Israel L. Rogers was treasurer and David Dancer was vice president. I preached to the Saints two Sundays and visited many.

Early in August, Brother Adam Dennis took me the twenty-five miles to Allendale, Missouri, to Brother Joseph Hammer's home. I spoke two evenings in the village schoolhouse and then went by hack to Grant City and Maryville, where I took train for Atchison, Kansas. The branch of the church in that city was in charge of Brother David Williams and a



branch some miles in the country called Good Intent was in charge of Brother Daniel Munns. Brother Hiram Parker also lived there. All three of these brethren afterwards moved to Netawaka, Kansas. During August I preached both in the city and at Good Intent many times. It was the great grasshopper year when thousands of settlers were driven out of central and western Kansas because their crops were entirely destroyed. People in eastern Kansas had been established long enough to endure the loss of that year's crop. I well remember the loathesome mass of swarming hoppers and how they ate every green thing in fields and gardens and stripped the trees of leaves. They flew up before us and many were crushed under our feet, also when they rose up high to cross the Missouri River, I looked through a spy glass into the dense throng of millions high up in the air. Gazing as nearly into the sun as one could, the shining on the wings of the countless host was a sight not to be forgotten.

On August 25, 1874, I turned my face homeward, but stopped at Saint Joseph and preached twice on Sunday, August 26. Was cared for at the home of Brother and Sister John Burlington. Brother Robert Winning had recently married their daughter Nellie, and they lived with her parents at that time. I was also at Brother and Sister Palfrey's.

On August 31 I came by way of Maryville and Grant City to Allendale. There I preached three sermons. But being anxious to return to my own field, and to my special work, I only stayed over Sunday at the colony. Then went on to Sandwich and labored there and at Fox River, Batavia, Wilton Center, Braidwood and Streator until our November conference convened in the Mission branch. Brother Joseph Smith and William W. Blair were both present and the latter was asked by the conference to go with me to Janesville, Wisconsin, because of a challenge sent by a man who wished our best man

to come and debate with the renowned soul sleeper, Mr. Sheldon. Brother Blair in his "Memoirs" tells of this trip and how Mr. Sheldon excused himself and backed out. When the debate fell through Brother Blair returned to Sandwich by way of Burlington, Wisconsin. I remained at Brother O. N. Dutton's and preached in the grange hall eighteen times to large congregations. But the defection of Noah Dutton and his public attacks upon us nullified our efforts and there were no baptisms. Brother O. N. Dutton did not follow his father but remained steadfast, as also did his wife. Their son Jasper O. Dutton has been in the missionary field many years now and is well known to the church.

One incident I mention here because it gave me much comfort in the knowledge that the Lord guides his work no matter who proves recreant or goes wrong. As district president I was expected to go from Janesville to Burlington to attend to putting a president over this branch in place of Brother John C. Gaylord who had died. That the delay might not be too long I asked Brother Blair when he left me to help them, if the Holy Spirit made it plain to him what action to take and whom to choose. If he did not receive guidance then I would act on arrival when through at grange hall. Brother O. N. Dutton said he would take me the thirty-five miles with a team, and thus we went over there.

And here is the singular or striking part of the affair: As we rode along the subject came suddenly into my mind and I asked "Did Brother Blair attend to that matter?" Instantly a voice spoke saying, "Let David Montgomery be ordained to the priest's office and placed in charge of the branch." I knew Brother Montgomery to be a noble and worthy man in his life and character, also a careful and a safe man in his ways. On arrival I asked what had been done and was told that Brother Blair had not acted but left it for me. I learned that all the

Saints wanted Brother Montgomery but that the most of them held that he ought to be ordained an elder to best serve the interests of the work. However his wife objected, saying that as an elder he was liable to be sent out as a missionary, and for this she was not willing. She was not a member of the church, although always as kind and hospitable to the Saints and elders as could be. And she said she was willing for David to be ordained a priest and serve the branch. I honor her memory for her good works.

Therefore on Sunday, when the Saints met, I related what had been spoken to me as the Lord's instruction and it was so accepted and acted upon. He was ordained a priest and proved a faithful pastor. I believe that the Lord had respect for Mrs. Montgomery's feelings and so gave the instruction I have related. And it was comforting to me, because I found that it exactly fitted the case and the necessity. If Brother Blair had already attended to the matter then the words I received would have been unaccountable and have tried my heart severely. Hence as instruction from the Lord it came when the branch needed to know what action to take. It may be spoken of as a small matter, yet it was in accordance with the promises of Christ and the custom of the apostles in the early church as to selecting the ministry. Paul wrote: "As the Lord hath called . . . so ordain I in all churches." The instance I have related is only one of thousands experienced among the Lord's ministers in the latter days as well as among his ministers in ancient times, no doubt.

One of the most respected and loved friends of those times was Brother John S. Keir, grandfather of the present Bishop James F. Keir. In the severe winter weather of December 1870, I drove from Brother Dancer's (Wilton Center) to the Braidwood coal mines to become acquainted with that branch, Brother Edmond C. Briggs going with me because he knew

where to find our people in the great spread of coal shafts and miners' cabins. Brother Keir was branch president and Peter Devlin, Frank Lofty, David Kerr and James Frew were leading brethren. I soon saw the almost universal humility, lowliness of heart, and Christ-like love that bound the Saints together, chiefly Scotch people there, but also some Welsh. Their happiness when convened for either preaching or prayer services, and the singing began, was very evident and their joy was inspiring to witness.

Brother Keir had a cautious and self-controlled spirit, and his earnest advice was heeded, not only by our people but also he was honored among the body of miners when they held their council meetings to discuss grievances and make requests for better conditions from the mine owners.

Brother and Sister Keir, Brother and Sister Kerr and Brother and Sister Frew (all related) had been in Utah and seen the evils there and had but recently come away, gladly uniting with the Reorganized church when they proved it.

While at Burlington Branch, Wisconsin, in December, 1874, I preached there and at Sugar Creek about two weeks, and on December 28 reached Sandwich, where I had arranged to board and lodge at Brother Austin Howard's while I worked on the church records through the winter. My efforts were to obtain corrected lists of branch membership throughout the church, as being the first step toward improving records. Not any branch reports or documents that had come to Brother Sheen during his illness or after his death were permitted to come into my hands. They were either simply withheld or else destroyed.

It was a great task to obtain corrections, especially because it had been thought that anyone would do as a branch clerk and recorder, also because nearly all of those chosen made the shortest work of it they could. Some had no books and they

used sheets of paper and sometimes they had items on fragments of paper. Some paid small attention to items of birth, baptism, confirmation and ordination dates and places. Seldom was stated the names of the branches from which members were received or to which members removed, and the dates letters were voted or received. And when no items of birth, baptism or confirmation were given on reports it was sometimes impossible to tell who the individuals were, especially where several of the same name were members of the church.

I remember that on one page of the record of a branch were three Elizabeth Morgan's with no information about them except that they came by letter of removal, branch not stated nor any items of birth, baptism, or confirmation. Years later I found all three in a branch composed chiefly of Welsh miners, and then I got items and what branches they had lived in and so filled up more than one record with their items.

But for thirty-two years (1874 to 1906) I followed up this work and gradually, by the use of specially printed branch and district books and branch reports, and by many branches electing more careful and better qualified clerks, I obtained good results. But it was a never-ending work, and my interest in it was so intense that often I wrote on the books or the correspondence until eleven and even twelve o'clock at night. Usually I was out preaching through the summer and then tried to make up for that by writing each night (as well as by day) through the winter when I should have taken rest and conserved my strength. As a reward I was told that my work was not worth much because it did not take me all the time. I could have used all the time by working reasonable hours as other men do.

I also served as church secretary twenty-two years from 1874 to 1896, making and correcting each year complete records of all the quorums of the church from the presidency to

the deacons. Also I made scrap books of the published minutes of all General Conferences, down until such were published in pamphlet form, with index. How I endured it all I do not know unless the Lord specially blessed me with strength. A revelation that Joseph gave to me April 19, 1890 said that my labors and sacrifices for the church and the church records were accepted and approved of God, and that the Spirit of the Lord had watched over me and blessed my labors; also that I should continue in patience to "correct the records." I did so for sixteen years more, and then the burdens and unpleasant things, with failing health, were too much to endure longer.

In April, 1876, I was chosen as assistant editor to Brother Joseph, also as one of the board of publication, and in June I resigned as district president and devoted my time to the *Herald* and *Zion's Hope*. But nearly every day when six o'clock came I turned to my church recorder's desk and took up that work until late hours, and so continued until October, 1880, when I resigned editorial work and removed to Lamoni.

For several years I was with Brethren Israel L. Rogers and David Dancer as one of the Presiding Bishopric, but I have ever since then believed that it was a mistake by Brother Rogers that he did not choose a man who had a natural adaptation to financial affairs and one fully capable for such a work. Also the same about my serving as one of the board of publication. My tastes are for books and study and for intellectual and spiritual affairs. In my own financial matters I have been foresighted and had capacity to keep things level, to take care of what little I had, and to always be free from debt. But larger things I was never qualified for, only in the way of caution not to go far into debt. However, that is only one item in business affairs. I have always regretted that I accepted those callings. However, all three, Brethren Rogers, Dancer, and myself, resigned in April, 1882, and Brother George A.

Blakeslee was chosen as the Bishop to succeed Brother Rogers.

In April, 1879, being chosen and ordained a high priest I was also elected as secretary of the quorum in 1882. In that I served twenty-one years, until 1903. Previously to 1879 I had been secretary of the first quorum of elders. When Brother Banta removed from Sandwich to Lamoni in 1877 the Sandwich Branch urged that I become president there. So I finally consented, although I had to take the evening train at Plano every Saturday night and travel five miles and have a busy time each Sunday at Sandwich instead of resting. Sometimes I also went over for the Wednesday night prayer meeting. There was an early morning train back so I lost no time from the office. I lodged either at Brother Israel L. Rogers or G. W. Trout's home.

On October 7, 1879, I was married to Sister Clara B. Sellon at her parents' home in Burlington, Iowa, Brother Joseph Smith performing the ceremony. We made a month's trip to Lamoni to visit Brother and Sister Dancer and a host of other kind Saints. Then returned east and lived in Plano a year, until October, 1880. Accepting Brother Dancer's offer of a share in the grain and lumber business at Lamoni we moved here and I entered upon new scenes and new activities. I was blessed financially and built us a home in which we have lived now over thirty-eight years. One daughter, Helen Vivian, was born in Plano in July, 1880, and Ruth and Alfreda were born here. All have died and gone to the place of the blest. Also one other was lost.

But I could not be happy out of gospel work and after I had a home free from debt I gave up business and worked on the church records and did some preaching. Later I was chosen as president of the Decatur District, now Lamoni Stake, and for about eight years I traveled summer and fall among the branches and in new places. The branches were Lamoni,

Davis City, Pleasanton, Leon, Greenville, Evergreen, Lucas, Creston (for a time), Ellston, in Iowa; and Lone Rock and Allendale in Missouri. I pursued the same plan I had in Illinois and Wisconsin, and many times was greatly blessed in my work of visiting and preaching, also in visiting and talking with those not Saints, a good many of whom were baptized at the time or later.

Looking back over the fifty-six years since I was baptized I see plainly many mistakes that I made, largely so through ignorance, because of inexperience; sometimes because those in office who should have done the managing, laid the responsibility upon me and gave no advice or counsel and then left me to suffer the consequences. Therefore the years of grief and humiliation I have suffered. Many years ago the wrongs done caused me to retaliate to some degree, but that is now in the past. And wrong ideas were circulated, such as had no foundation, in fact or in truth.

But I am thankful that in the life to come the truth of all things and the feelings of all hearts will be known before the Great Judge. The great need in the past has been the Holy Spirit's power in such sufficiency among us as to create kindness, forbearance, genuine brotherly love, such as seeks to save, to bless, to consider all sides of a matter, especially the defense, instead of accepting insinuations and accusations, and being encased in prejudice which prevented justice. Ofttimes a little inquiry, prompted by kind brotherhood, would have explained things and all have been made right. But instead many have been wounded and some have entirely given up hope. "This is my commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you." The love that our Savior possessed contained no distrust, no malice, no secret ill will, no unforgiveness. Had this love fully prevailed with us, thousands of difficulties would



have been solved and many Saints been fed, nourished, and redeemed who have become lost.

At the organization of the Lamoni Stake, on April 30, 1901, I was chosen and ordained as one of the high council thereof. After serving about six years the deafness in my right ear had so increased that in 1907 I resigned that office. My left ear became entirely deaf in the sixties, soon after I came from the army. Probably the exposure and ills I suffered there had much to do with it.

During the fifty-four years since my first ordination I have served in the cause in Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Texas, Colorado, California, and Utah, but my work in the last four States was only brief in each State. Have baptized over five hundred people and preached five hundred funeral sermons. In both cases the number would have been greater had not sickness or my absence from home, or my inability to go from home when requested, caused me to miss a great many funeral sermons, baptisms and marriages.

One of the never-to-be-forgotten testimonies I have had was that received before my nine sermons on the Book of Mormon were delivered at Independence, Missouri, in February, 1894. I believe it is worth relating because it was such a plain proof of God's inspiring power given to one so unfitted and weak as I was. I needed such help because I had no ability equal to that which the Lord gave me at that time. It came like this: In January, totally unexpected by me, came a letter from Brother William Crick, publisher of *Zion's Ensign*, saying that the Religio, the Sunday school and the branch had all united in a request that I come to Independence to preach several sermons on the Book of Mormon. But, although I had studied the subject a great deal and had written *Herald* articles, one in February 1869, and a series of thirteen in 1872-3,

yet I had never tried to preach any course of sermons that included antiquities, but only the Bible proofs. Hence, though my heart and mind were deeply interested, and I longed to be able for it, I yet declined to make the attempt, and I wrote them that they would have to get some one else.

But soon came a reply that they would not do so and that I must come. About this I prayed earnestly. The only light given to me was that I should write them that I would prayerfully seek and also would go through the books and see how things looked. If the Spirit of the Lord greatly aided me and made the way and the proofs plain so that I could not resist, I would consent to come. But if it did not so direct I would not even try to come. They *must* get some other man.

I sat down and began to go over the antiquarian writings of John L. Stephens, Josiah Priest, J. D. Baldwin, C. G. Foster, H. H. Bancroft, Desire Charney, W. H. Prescott, and other historians. The first distinct instruction given me was, "Take the Jaredites first, as the first people who came." The next was to take up the narrative and follow it in its order clear through. In the first I was astonished at the clear proofs brought to my attention, those I had never heard any of our ministers use nor seen in any writings. As I continued the Holy Spirit bore witness to me in such power and gave me light I had never had before. All fear and dread left me and I made page after page of references and quotations to use in the sermons. Therefore I wrote Brother Crick that I would come, even though it would throw upon me a great burden of labor at nighttime, on the church records, in addition to day labors after my return to Lamoni, to make ready for General Conference. I took with me nearly all the above named books as proofs for our claims. On arrival I found that Brother Wallace Robinson had made a very large map of the south half of North America, all of Mexico and Central America and the

north half of South America. It helped me greatly. I continued nine evenings. Although there was deep snow yet the audiences continued large each night. Sister Belle Robinson was the shorthand reporter and the result was published in the *Ensign* during several months. I finally revised the whole thing and it was published by the Board of Publication and has been on sale year after year. For the truth's sake I am glad the sermons were given. I did not ask for nor have I received any income from the sale of the books.

Among my greatest friends and benefactors I count good books. When I was a twelve year old boy, the youngest child of a poor widow, I often looked into the booksellers' windows at Beloit, Wisconsin, and longed for means to buy some. But we only had money for bare necessities. However, I borrowed and read about the Pilgrim Fathers and the Manhattan and Virginia colonies and the Indian wars, the Revolution and the nation that grew under God's care. In my boyish patriotism it seemed that he protected it, though I did not fully see the fact until later in my life.

When I took up gospel work I wanted books that made plain that in all ages the Lord has largely directed and ruled in "the kingdom of men." The Holy Spirit set its seal upon my heart and inspired me to see that it can be proved to honest souls that the providence of God has always shaped, more or less, the destinies of nations and kingdoms. This comes from his desire for them to do right and to execute justice and mercy; and if they fail to so perform then the reward of selfishness and sin comes upon them as punishments.

At an early time I found the declaration of the prophets, especially of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, were long ago fulfilled as to Nineveh, Babylon, Egypt, Jerusalem, Tyre, and other nations and cities of antiquity, and I rejoiced to read of it, and of the discovery of antiquarian proofs of God's word set

forth by Henry Layard, Doctor Hincks, George and Henry Rawlinson, James Rich, Paul E. Botta and other travelers, explorers and historians. Their work was from 1840 to 1847.

I found that the Lord seemd to have chosen 1840 and thereabout as the period in which to bring to light the prophetical, historical, and antiquarian proofs of the truth, the divine truth, of both the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Within a period of ten years from 1840 was brought forth and published the most remarkable and striking evidences for both books. In his "Bampton Lectures" Salisbury, England, in 1859, Professor George Rawlinson spoke of the discoveries since 1840 saying: "It seems to be time to bid the nations of the earth once more to 'bring forth their witnesses.'" (Isaiah 43: 9-12) and the "records of former things."

Of course Professor Rawlinson referred alone to the Bible, but we also see that the great work of John L. Stephens in Yucatan and Central America in 1840-42 was the beginning of the remarkable evidences and proofs of the truth of the Book of Mormon that were brought to light and published prior to 1850. I have original issues of Stephens published, two volumes in 1841 and two volumes in 1842, also W. H. Prescott's Conquest of Mexico published in 1843, and his Conquest of Peru published in 1847. Before that were Josiah Priest's American Antiquities, published in 1833 and John Delafield's Antiquities of America published in 1839. Since then have been published H. H. Brownell's New World in 1856; E. C. Squier's Nicaragua in 1856, and his Land of the Incas in 1876; C. W. Brownell's Indian Races in 1860; J. D. Baldwin's Ancient America in 1872; Colonel J. W. Foster's Prehistoric Races in 1873; H. H. Bancroft's Native Races in 1875; J. T. Short's North American of Antiquity in 1882; Desire Charney's Ancient Cities of the New World in 1887; and Honorable E. M. Haine's American Indian in 1888. I have all these

works in my library and others not as valuable as those I have named.

Brother Joseph Luff has the earnest and undying love of my heart for his forty-five years of faithful friendship. He advised, counseled and strengthened when he saw faults. And the Spirit of the Lord gave him understanding, and in his heart has been forbearance, mercy and love, also divine compassion, instead of tearing in pieces and helping to destroy.

In 1868 began my acquaintance with Sister Marietta Walker, which resulted in a lifelong friendship, with much comfort and benefit to me. Added to her natural ability the Lord especially endowed her with the quickenings of his Spirit, thus enabling her to go through the many years of service and to accomplish labors that no one else was able to come up to, for which no one else seemed to be anywhere near fitted. Now in her eighty-sixth year the influence of her writings in the past continues on and on. Her work in pure teaching and the highest morality was for many years made plain when she was the editor of both *Autumn Leaves* and *Zion's Hope*, and the eternal effects thereof are recorded on high.

If to the readers of this biography any of it appears egotistical or conceited I state that I have only desired to relate the facts as a historical detail of my experiences and not with any glory to myself. I can see plainly that I have been but a very small instrument in the hands of God, and one very much prone to make mistakes, as well as one largely ignorant as to proper ways to walk in and courses to pursue even when my heart fully desired to pursue and to perform in the best manner possible.

One thing is very evident, and which has loomed up more and more as the years have gone by, has been the need of a greater unity in purpose and a greater harmony in action in the church, as well as the avoidance of friction and antagon-

ism, which have brought darkness and uncertainty as well as personal distress and grief. But to establish this unity and harmony there was needed a thoroughly permeating power of love, of the divine love that is from God, to dwell in and continually operate upon the minds and hearts of all Saints, and in particular upon the minds and hearts of the men in the quorums of the church. It would have been good had it been possible in the past for human hearts to have recognized the necessity, and to have really lived up to the requirements stated by the Lord Jesus Christ in the testimony of John, reading as follows:

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.—John 13: 34-35.

“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.”—John 15: 12.

How very far we might have been upon the road both to heaven and Zion we can have some idea by reading these texts and meditating upon the purposes and intentions of the Lord. But Satan has had great power in every age to prevent the completeness of men’s salvation and happiness, except in the case of Enoch, as described in Genesis 6: 76-78 in the Inspired Version:

And all the days of Zion, in the days of Enoch, were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch, and all his people walked with God, and he dwelt in the midst of Zion. And it came to pass that Zion was not, for God received it up into his own bosom; and from thence went forth the saying, Zion is fled. And all the days of Enoch were four hundred and thirty years.

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